

MACLAND ROAD CORRIDOR STUDY

Planning Context

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Cobb County...Expect the Best!

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1.0 Planning Context

1.1 Background

In January of 2007, at the Board of Commissioners Management Retreat, there were discussions concerning the need to be proactive regarding development on Macland Road. Macland Road is a less developed corridor that serves as a major east-west transportation route for residents of western Cobb County and Paulding County. Given the stage of development existing in this area, there is a real opportunity to impact future development patterns. It is important to plan for land use transportation linkages that will improve transportation efficiency while establishing a framework of land use changes that will add to the area's quality-of-life rather than replicating standard suburban residential patterns.

The result of the discussion with the Board of Commissioners was to charge Community Development, in conjunction with the Department of Transportation and Economic Development, with the task of completing a Macland Road corridor study by December 2007. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan short-term work program also includes the preparation of the Macland Road Corridor Study as a major implementation item to be completed over the next five years.

There are four main reasons for the creation of this study document.

- ◆ Transportation Improvement Project (TIP) to widen the western portion of Macland Road from two (2) lanes to four (4) lanes to increase roadway capacity.

- ◆ TIP project to design and construct the Windy Hill connector, a new east-west route from Macland Road to Windy Hill Road. This would facilitate traffic movement and provide better access to I-75/I-285 for western Cobb County/Paulding County commuters.
- ◆ Create a land use scenario that will assist in improving transportation-land use connectivity, protect stable existing neighborhoods, and ensure quality new development along the corridor.
- ◆ Proactively plan for new growth by ensuring a sufficient mix of land uses and develop some basic architectural styles that will enhance this area's sense-of-place

1.2 History

Creek and Cherokee Indians moved north and inhabited what is now Cobb County around 1600 A.D. They dominated the area until The Treaty of 1819 forced the Native Americans back across the Chattahoochee River. Villages in and around present day Cobb County were points for trade and negotiations between the Indians and pioneers. As settlers continued to move into the area they set up homes and farms.

In 1831, one such settler, David Newton McEachern from Cabarrus County, North Carolina came to Georgia and established his first tract of land and later extended it to one thousand acres. Tenant farmers called the area "Mac's Land", which evolved into "Macland," the namesake of Macland Road as well as the community of Macland located at the intersection

of Macland Road and Lost Mountain Road. The historic Macland community is the only community along its entire length.

Macland Road saw no changes in its first 20 years of existence. Once it was commissioned in 1962, the rural corridor was fully paved and extended from U.S. 278 in Paulding County east to Powder Springs Road. Today, Macland Road remains two-lane from Paulding County to Lost Mountain Road, where the two-lanes widen to a four-lane, median divided highway. Through the years, development for the most part has been limited to corner stores and large lot subdivisions; however with the inventory of undeveloped land dwindling in other parts of the county, the need for large vacant properties is threatening to replace the rural character of the corridor with a more urbanized lifestyle. For the purpose of this study we will be concentrating our efforts on the Cobb County portion of Macland Road which is approximately seven (7) miles in length from the Paulding County line to the terminus at Powder Springs Road.

1.3 Location

Macland Road is located in the mid-western portion of Cobb County, in the northwest portion of the Atlanta metropolitan region. Within the near vicinity of Macland Road are two neighboring counties, Douglas County and Paulding County, as well as three of Cobb County's six cities, Powder Springs, Austell, and Marietta. The entire corridor is located within unincorporated Cobb County, approximately one and a half (1.5) miles southwest of Marietta and one (1) mile directly north of Powder Springs. Based upon political boundaries established via information provided in the 2000 decennial

census, Macland Road is a line of demarcation between Commission Districts 1 on the northern half of the corridor and Commission District 4 on the southern half of the corridor. Other important features in this area include the southern tip of the Kennesaw National Battlefield Park, and two main creeks that feed the Chattahoochee River basin; Noses Creek and Mud Creek.

1.4 Planning Study Area

The Macland Road Corridor, for the purpose of this study, is defined as the Primary Study Area or the parcels directly and indirectly served by Macland Road from the Paulding County line to Powder Springs Road. The total length of the study area is approximately seven (7) miles. The width of the study area is roughly a quarter of a mile on the north and south side of Macland Road equaling a total width of one-half of a mile. The Primary Study Area has no main point of central tendency due to the lack of development along the corridor. The Block Group area serves as the Secondary Study Area and was developed to compare and contrast Demographic, Economic and Land Use data of the community against the Primary Study Area and Cobb County. Figure 1 shows the study areas and how they are geographically related to Cobb County.

